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26 November 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Bar

SUBJECT : Summary of Two AES Research Reports on CT's

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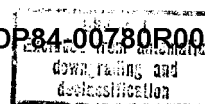
1. The first report finds that there is no relationship between training evaluations ~~of~~ the Support Services Course and Manpower Ratings of job performance and potential. This finding is rather academic because training evaluations are no longer given in the Support Services ~~Course~~.

2. The second report finds that for the 20 CT classes between September 1959 and February 1967 there is really no difference in the ability between those CT's who drop out quickly and those who stay. It also notes that CT's who leave after assignment to Agency positions are a little brighter than those who stay. However the difference in ability is "only modest" and the CT's who stay are in the top half of Agency professionals and the top 5% of general population in intellectual ability.

3. I don't see that these findings suggest any practical guideline for improved management of the CT Program. They do suggest however the need for further research into the sources of job dissatisfaction and reasons for leaving the Agency.

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14 November 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Support

THROUGH : Chief, Assessment and Evaluation Staff, OMS

SUBJECT : Elaboration of Research Findings Reported in
Systems Analysis of Psychological Data
Progress Report

REFERENCE : Periodic Progress Report of 22 October 1968

1. Attached are the two AES research reports you requested. The first deals with the finding of no relationship between training evaluations in the Support Services Course and the Manpower Ratings of job performance and potential. The second compares the intellectual abilities of CTs who left the Agency with those who remained.

2. We would like to express our appreciation for the opportunity which you recently provided us to brief your staff.

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Acting Chief, Research Branch
Assessment and Evaluation Staff
Office of Medical Services

Acting Chairman, Task Force on Systems Analysis
of Psychological Data Pertaining to Career Trainees

Attachments:

- A. Discussion of Finding of No Relationships between Support Services Course Training Evaluations and Ratings of Job Performance and Potential
- B. Comparisons of Intellectual Abilities of Career Trainees Who Left the Agency with Those Who Remained

Distribution:

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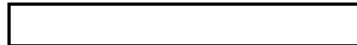
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ATTACHMENT A

DISCUSSION OF FINDING OF NO RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN
SUPPORT SERVICES COURSE TRAINING EVALUATIONS AND
RATINGS OF JOB PERFORMANCE AND POTENTIAL

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I

This memo responds to your request for elaboration of the research finding that training evaluations in the Support Services Course (S.S.C.) were not predictive of ratings of job performance and potential. Herein we will describe more fully than was possible in our earlier briefing the details and findings of the research relating S.S.C. and other CT training course outcomes to the ratings collected by the Committee on Professional Manpower.

Basically, what we found was that for a sample of 93 male CTs, the relationships between final course evaluations in S.S.C. and Manpower ratings were essentially random ones. Conversely, for all other training courses taken by CTs,* statistically significant relationships were found between training grades and one or more of the ratings of performance and potential. We hasten to add that the relationships involving these other courses, while often significant, are not in absolute terms overly impressive. Typically, only a small proportion of the variability of job ratings is predictable from final training grades alone. The significance of the discrepant pattern of results for S.S.C. should be assessed in light of certain features of the course itself, the sample involved in the analyses, the grading system, etc. This background information is given below:

*(Excluding OFC, for which insufficient data for analyses were available)

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Course Objectives -- S.S.C. (Abstracted from course description):

The Support Services Course is designed for Career Trainees who will be assigned to the Support Services. The program intends to orient the Career Trainee to the mission and functions of the Support Services. Indoctrination in some detail is given in the various aspects of support pertinent to the operation of a field station. Included in this instruction is coverage of personnel, security, medical, finance, logistics, and travel subjects.

Sample:

The sample on which data analyses were based consisted of the 93 male CTs who had taken the S.S.C. sometime between 25 January 1965 (S.S.C. #1) and 1 December 1967 (S.S.C. #1-68) and on whom Manpower ratings were available. It should be noted that this group represents less than one-half of the CTs who have taken the S.S.C. since its inception to date. We are unaware of any selective biases differentiating this group from the remaining CTs who have taken S.S.C.

Achievement Record:

With but one minor modification, the basis for assigning grades in S.S.C. remained unchanged over the seven course runnings from which the study sample was drawn. Students received grades on (1) a "First Week Test" covering organization and functions of the Headquarters elements and CIA support policies; (2) a "Logistics Test"; (3) a "Finance Test" including preparation of a comprehensive travel voucher -- in earlier runnings of the S.S.C., a separate "Travel Test" was administered; and (4) a "Comprehensive Problem" consisting of a series of practical exercises.

The overall grade given in S.S.C. is a weighted summation of the grades received on the above elements. This summary numerical grade is converted to and reported in terms of the adjectival ratings used in Fitness Report rating -- Weak (W), Adequate (A), Proficient (P), Strong (S), and Outstanding (O). (In fact, grades of P, S, and O were the only ones assigned to the CTs in the sample.)

II

In the following section, we develop a number of hypotheses to account for the finding of no systematic relationship between S.S.C. grades and job

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ratings. Where the availability of data permitted tests of these hypotheses, results are reported.

Statistically significant relationships are difficult or impossible to obtain when the distribution of scores on either the predictor measure, in this case final course evaluations in S.S.C., or on the criteria, Manpower ratings, is severely restricted. In light of this statistical requirement, we hypothesized that either or both of these distributions were restricted for the S.S.C. sample. We found in fact that the spread of scores on the Manpower ratings of overall performance and potential for the total CT Manpower sample (N=386) and for the S.S.C. sample did not differ significantly. We also found no reliable differences in average performance and potential ratings of these two samples.

Where comparability of grading systems permitted comparisons with other training courses, we found that the distribution of grades in S.S.C. tended to be only moderately more restricted than those in other courses, and to a statistically significant degree in only two of four instances. Hence, it is difficult to attribute the failure to find relationships between S.S.C. and job ratings to the distribution of predictor and criterion measures alone.

Since the S.S.C. has been given only since January 1965 and since Manpower ratings were collected in January 1968, we expected and found that one-third of the S.S.C. sample had been on the job less than one year at the time job ratings were collected. We hypothesized that ratings

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made of people on the job for such a short period of time might be highly unreliable and biased, and that by including them in the analyses, true relationships between course and job performance would be obscured. Accordingly, we re-analyzed our data, restricting the study sample to those CTs (N=59) who had been on the job for at least one year. Again, we found no significant relationships between S.S.C. training evaluations and overall job performance and potential.

Another explanation for the unique S.S.C.-Manpower results might be that major shifts had occurred in the assignment of grades over the several runnings of the Support Course. As noted above, the basis for evaluating students had not materially changed in this time, but this, of course, did not preclude shifts in average grade assigned. If this average grade fluctuated from class to class without a corresponding and real change in average class performance, differences in grading standards are indicated -- perhaps administratively imposed. The resulting discrepancies in the meaning of Proficient, Strong, and Outstanding performances over time would seriously reduce chances of obtaining meaningful relationships with external criteria. An approximate test for such shifts in grading standards is provided by comparing the average grades assigned in the different runnings of S.S.C. Our working assumption would be that these averages would not differ reliably. Based on data for 151 CTs in seven consecutive runnings of S.S.C. -- January 1965 through November 1967 -- we found small but statistically significant differences in the average grade of classes. For

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the first five classes, the average grade assigned increased progressively; this trend was reversed for the following two classes. This is not unusual for a newly developed course as criteria of training performance become refined and consensually validated only over time.

We conclude this section by noting that the reported emphasis in S.S.C. was on operating field stations and that the graded tests and exercises reflected this emphasis. If in fact many or most of the CTs included in the study sample were not performing in support roles in field stations at the time ratings were collected, the likelihood of finding relationships between training and job criteria would certainly be diminished. Unfortunately, we have no data to enlighten us on this possibility.

III

In this final section, we comment briefly on the assumption implicit in the interest shown in the lack of relationship between S.S.C. and job ratings. To wit, positive and significant relationships should obtain between training and job criteria.

CT training courses, especially those designed for CTs entering a specific directorate -- for example, IPC, SSC, OC -- prepare trainees to fill certain roles. They do this by teaching the skills and developing the knowledge and attitudes necessary to perform in those roles. To the degree that the demands of training mirror those of the job, systematic relationships between training and job ratings would be expected; however, without full appreciation of these demand characteristics, our expectancies become arbitrary.

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Judging from the fact that performance in S.S.C. is significantly related to AES tests of non-verbal reasoning, mathematical abilities, and interests in accountancy, it would seem that the stated course emphases -- accounting, finance, and logistics -- are real ones. Competence in these applied areas is no doubt necessary for satisfactory job performance, but is not in itself a sufficient determiner of that performance. Evidently the more important predictors of job ratings lie in areas not covered or evaluated in the S.S.C.

Finally, it will be remembered that all data analyses involving the Support Services Course were based on early runnings of the course. If substantive changes in teaching methods, content, grading, etc. have occurred over the past two years, the findings reported in this memo would be open to thorough review.

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ATTACHMENT B

COMPARISONS OF INTELLECTUAL ABILITIES OF
CAREER TRAINEES WHO LEFT THE AGENCY WITH
THOSE WHO REMAINED



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